CBI cases under Wildlife Protection Act

2542. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI has booked more than 13 cases since 1997 under the Wildlife Protection Act and in many cases it has secured convictions;

(b) whether an infamous skin smuggler, involved in 9 cases under the Act since 1988 is still facing preliminary trials and is out on bail;

(c) whether the CBI Wildlife Cell is strapped of expert manpower and whether its Narcotics Cell is doubling up, to handle Wildlife cases; and

(d) whether CBI still depends on expert advise on wildlife from outside NGO circuits and environmental activists?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The CBI has registered 13 cases under Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 since 1996. After completing investigation complaints have been filed in 11 cases.

(b) No such person is involved in any of the wildlife offences detected by CBI.

(c) SIU-XI Branch of CBI is handling Narcotics cases along with offences under Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972. No separate staff has been sanctioned to them for dealing with wildlife offences.

(d) Although CBI takes intelligence inputs about wildlife offences from environmental activists from time to time, it is not dependent on such activists for expert advice.

Lease of forest land in Alaganchi forest in Karnataka

2543. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Karnataka Government has requested the Centre, for leasing of 188.40 ha. of forest land in Alaganchi State Forest of Bandipur National Park, for rehabilitation of 154 tribal families uprooted for the purpose of construction of Bandipur National Park; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The Government of Karnataka submitted a proposal for diversion of 188.40 ha. forest land in favour of Revenue Department for rehabilitation of 154 tribal families displaced by formation of Bandipur National Park and construction of Kabini Reservoir in District Mysore, Karnataka. The proposal was rejected on 21.03.2001 due to the reasons that the intent of non-forestry use in the National Park/wildlife sanctuary is not in consonance with the provisions of section-29 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and the orders of the Supreme Court banning removal of dead, diseased, dying or wind-fallen trees, drift wood and grasses, etc. from any National Park or Game Sanctuary.

Atrocities by Forest Officials on tribal women

†2544. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details, including Chhattisgarh/MP, regarding atrocities and violence being committed by the Department of Forests officials against the tribal women, in the name of forest security, during last one year;

(b) whether there is any plan to evict the inhabitants of forests from the forest areas; if so, whether the inhabitants of the forests being evicted are being provided with the land and other means of livelihood; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) There is no specific report with the Government of India that atrocities and violence are being committed by the Officials of Forest Department against the tribal women, in the name of forest security, during the last one year. However, the Government is aware about a newspaper report of tribals' molestation in Chhattisgarh, published in the Hindustan Times dated 24.02.2002. The Central Government immediately took up the matter with the Chhattisgarh Government and requested for immediate enquiry and report.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.